



(Photo by Sgt. Colby Hauser, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs)

**"Santa Claus" presents a gift to Kiara Searles, 9 years old, at the 215th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division's annual Christmas party Dec. 2 at Clark Elementary School.**

## Santa makes an early visit to Cav Kids

**By Amanda Kim Stairrett  
Fort Hood Herald**

FORT HOOD, Texas - Santa came in combat boots to the 215th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team's Christmas party at Clarke Elementary School on Fort Hood Dec. 2.

He was a popular celebrity during the afternoon visit, being mobbed as he stepped off of the Fort Hood Fire Department's truck and making his way to the crowd waiting for him curbside.

Battalion leaders wanted to mimic last year's Christmas party, which was a big

hit, said Capt. Sanci Stone, battalion rear commander.

Each child got a wrapped present from Santa's bag. And families could decorate cookies, make holiday crafts, take a whack at Christmas piñatas and eat food prepared by each company's Family Readiness Group.

Klara Searles and Hannah Taylor sat at the cookie table, taking the time to frost and decorate cookies as if they were works of art. Carefully concentrating, each applied a helping of frosting and blanket of candy sprinkles to complete their master-

pieces.

The event was a chance for families to gather and have a little fun, Stone said. It was also a way to boost morale when heading into the holidays, because the battalion is spending the season in Iraq having deployed two months ago.

Single soldiers from the battalion also came out to man the event and enjoy the festive mood.

Phyllis Kirklin, wife of battalion commander, Lt. Col. Ron Kirklin, said

## Santa comes to Cav Country

### Santa

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Saturday that she was happy to have the families at the party.

Staff Sgt. Denise Bullard, rear officer in charge for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, compared the event to a family reunion because of the closeness of units' families.

She said the event provided an outlet for kids to get together with others who are experiencing the same things, like a parent's deployment.

The event was also a way to show families that the battalion cares about them. It gives them the feeling that, "When my soldier leaves, I will be taken care of," Bullard said.

And she knows how important that feeling is. Her husband, 1st Sgt. George Bullard of the 3rd Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery, deployed several months ago.

Bullard's mother came to stay with her and attended the weekend Christmas party.

"It did my heart some good to see everyone here," Bullard said.



(Photo by Sgt. Colby Hauser, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs)

**Children, both young and old, greet "Santa Claus" during his surprise visit at the 215th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division's annual Christmas party Dec. 2.**

### Arabic Phrase of the Day

*muraasil*

**Defined:  
reporter**

### Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 65  
Low: 41



Tomorrow

High: 65  
Low: 39



Thursday

High: 68  
Low: 39

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# Iraqis show unity, resolve in Qadaa meeting

By Spc. Chris McCann  
2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.

MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq - In the midst of a perception of spiraling violence, the Mahmudiyah Qadaa's first-ever meeting brought together groups from across the sectarian divide in a positive and fruitful discussion Dec. 6.

The Qadaa, a regional meeting of tribal leaders, government officials and military commanders, was held at the Iraqi Army Compound here.

It brought together Qadaa representatives from Yusufiyah, Mahmudiyah, al-Rashid and Lutifiyah, as well as Mahmudiyah Mayor Maayad Fadthil al-Shibli, Col. Ali al-Frejee, the commander of the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, Col. Mike Kershaw, commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (LI), Lt. Col. Robert Morschauer, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, and various Iraqi security and government representatives.

Col. Ali spoke of the security situation in the Mahmudiyah area, mentioning various examples of security improvements over the last three years, but there is still a long way to go, he said.

"Improving the security situation will require the help of all the people here, and all the civilians that you have influence over," Ali said.

He also mentioned the numbers of Iraqi soldiers that have been killed and wounded in the defense of their country, and how many terrorists the soldiers have detained - includ-



(Photo by Spc. Chris McCann 2nd BCT 10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs)

**Members of the Mahmudiyah Qadaa met for the first time at the Mahmudiyah Iraqi Army Compound Dec. 6. The meeting focused around security and reconciliation.**

ing 81 people targeted by the Iraqi Ministry of Defense.

Ali also stated that he had a message for the terrorists -- that the 4th Brigade, 6th IA Division will not stop hunting them down, a sentiment echoed by Brig. Gen. Ali, Mahmudiyah's police chief.

The mayor discussed national reconciliation briefly, saying that Iraq has suffered greatly in the recent past and that the Qadaa meetings are intended to help the people.

"We need to stop talking about religions and follow the initiatives of Prime Minister (Nouri) Al-Maliki," he said.

Several representatives from the Lutifiyah, Mahmudiyah, Al-Rasheed and Yusufiyah councils spoke, mostly about the security situation and the fact that unemployment causes people to turn to terrorism - because terror cells pay local residents to place improvised explosive devices, to fire upon Iraqi and coalition forces and other acts

of violence.

Most of the representatives thanked the Americans for their assistance and called on tribal leaders to control their areas.

Abu Amar, a member of the Mahmudiyah city council and a Shia, spoke at length. He said that his mission is to serve all Iraqis from Mahmudiyah to Fallujah. He asked for help from the tribes to stop outsiders from entering towns to do harm. Once this threat has stopped, he said, there will be no need for armed men within the city.

Abu Amar, however, also said that he was proud of the Gheriri and Janabi tribes - both Sunni - and Anbari tribe, which is Shia, as well as all of the 20 tribes that are covered under the Mahmudiyah Qadaa area.

"I used to go to any area and drink tea with people from any tribe," Abu Amar said. "We are one chain that cannot be divided."

He said attacks in Mahmudiyah kill women and

children, and because of the violence, everyone in the town carries a weapon to protect their areas. He said he wished that there would be no militia needed, and no terrorism.

As a good will gesture to the attending members and as an act of reconciliation, Col. Ali presented a list of 17 detainees, both Sunni and Shia. He said that he had expedited the investigations into their arrests. The 17 had been found innocent and were to be released.

The high point of the meeting, and perhaps the most cause for hope came near the end, when Col. Ali introduced Lt. Col. Abdul Muhsin, former commander of the 4th Battalion, 4th Brigade, 6th IA Division and now commander of the 2nd Battalion.

"What tribe are you from?" someone asked.

Muhsin's reply brought a round of applause from those gathered.

"Iraqi," he said.

# WWE Lays the 'Smack Down' on 'Grey Wolf'

By Spc. Ryan Stroud  
3-1st Cav. Public Affairs

BAQUBAH, Iraq -- The Soldiers of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, were treated with a visit from some of the World Wrestling Entertainment's biggest stars: World Tag-Team Champions Edge and Randy Orton, Carlito, Jeff Hardy, Chris Masters and Torrie Wilson, Dec. 7, at Forward Operating Base Warhorse.

The wrestlers took time out of their schedule to spend an afternoon with the Soldiers of "Grey Wolf," all in hopes of raising the Soldiers morale.

"We wanted to come out here to build morale," said Jeff Hardy, a former Tag-Team Champion. "This means the world to me that we are here, I just hope it means the world to the Soldiers also."

"WWE has come out here so we can be a part of a meet-and-greet with them," said Spc.

Steven San Agustin, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd BCT.

"This was a cool experience," added the native of Dededo, Guam. "They gave out t-shirts, coins, magazines and other items for us to have as souvenirs."

The wrestlers stood at tables as the excited Soldiers swarmed for their chance to meet their favorite star. Each wrestler signed autographs and posed with the elated Soldiers.

"The wrestlers were really humble and happy to sign things and pose for pictures with us," said San Agustin. "It seemed they were willing to do whatever it took to make [the Soldiers] happy."

"This whole experience was great," he added. "Meeting the wrestlers gives us a good memory of being in Iraq and that's really important."

"It means a lot that they are here," said Pvt. James Johnson, Company A, 215th Brigade



(Photos by Spc. Ryan Stroud, 3-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

**World Wrestling Entertainment star Torrie Wilson autographs a chair for the Soldiers of the 3rd "Grey Wolf" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.**

Support Battalion, and a native of San Antonio.

"They are taking time out of their schedule just to come out here and spend some time with us," he continued. "It really makes a difference in our morale."

Johnson also added he

appreciated the risk the wrestlers have taken to come spend time with the Soldiers.

"When they come out here, they put themselves at risk just so we can meet them and get some pictures, that's really special," said Johnson. "We do appreciate it. I know I will remember this for a long while."

Hardy said the risk was well worth it just to see the excitement from the Soldiers.

"This is a great experience," said Hardy. "It's my first time over here and I'm getting dirty and loving every minute of this."

"I hope the Soldiers get an excitement out of this," he continued. "I hope we brought them some joy. This trip was well worth it."

"But most importantly," said Hardy, "we want them to know we are just like them and appreciate what they do over here. We're all apart of the same team and we love what they do for us and our country."



**World Wrestling Entertainment star Jeff Hardy gives an autographed t-shirt to a fan during the WWE's meet-and-greet at FOB Warhorse, Dec 7. The wrestlers came to visit FOB Warhorse to help build morale and thank them for their service.**